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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

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IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

Contagion in Infectious Diseases.—In a report of an epidemic of measles in the barracks, Columbus, Ohio, Captain Christie of the Medical Corps, U. S. A., says he believes measles to be a more serious disease than it is usually considered. As regards its transmission, he thinks it must be contracted by direct contact with persons in the early stages, when catarrhal symptoms alone are present and the malady has not been diagnosed. He agrees in the more recent view that the organisms of disease die quickly after leaving the body of the patient, after either recovery or death. He says when the difficulty of keeping alive and cultivating the known organisms of disease is considered, and when it is known that most of them require the most favorable conditions of culture media, temperature and moisture in order to remain living and virulent, it does not seem reasonable to believe that the causative organisms of measles, scarlet fever, etc., could remain alive and retain their virulence on dry clothing, a bare wall, or other such locality so unfavorable to their growth. He advises early diagnosis and prompt isolation as a means of stamping out the disease.

Preservation of Health in School Children.—In a very excellent article in the *Medical Record* Dr. Rowland Godfrey Freeman writes of this important subject, which is of interest to all nurses, not only to those engaged in school work. He thinks a child of five should not have more than one hour a day in school, and this hour should be divided by periods of rest and exercise every ten minutes. When ten years old the child should not spend more than four hours a day in school and should have no home work. The schools, he believes to be the chief means of communicating contagious diseases to children. This should be obviated by proper inspection and isolation and well-ventilated, or open-air, schoolrooms. Every child with a cold should be excluded from school. Children who have not proper food at home should be fed at the public expense. Those specially interested in young children should read the article in the January *McClure's* on the system of education devised by Maria Montessori and just being introduced into this country from Italy.

Recovery in Seven Cases of Tetanus.—The death rate in tetanus being so high, and the prognosis in severe cases so unfavorable, renders any experiment with a successful termination intensely interesting. Dr. Pearce Kintzing reports in the *New York Medical Journal* a line of treatment which resulted in recovery in five consecutive cases under his own care and in two under the care of a colleague. Four of the seven patients were adults, three children.

The remedy employed was a solution of pure phenol, or carbolic acid of 10 per cent. strength, made by dissolving the deliquesced crystals in sterile water. The solution was then diluted according to the case, generally to thirty or forty minims, and administered by hypodermic injections deep into the muscles, the dose being repeated at intervals of three hours at first, increasing the interval as improvement manifested itself. The full adult dose used was ten drops of this ten per cent. solution, equalling practically one grain of pure crystalline phenol. The urine is carefully watched and if the characteristic smoky color develops strongly it should be considered a signal for temporary cessation of the injections. Dr. Kintzing says that during the time covered by the four hospital cases two patients were treated with antitoxin on the surgical side of the house and both died. He believes the remedy will be found useful in conditions other than tetanus, as meningitis and acute rheumatic fever.

The Treatment of Diphtheria Carriers.—As is well known the germs of diphtheria and typhoid fever may be actively present in persons who are not suffering from the disease in its acute stage and may be by them transmitted to others, producing a fresh case of the disease. Dr. Henry Page, of Manila, relates in the *New York Medical Journal* his experience in combating this condition. He used a culture of Staphylococcus pyogenes aurens, which in one case was originally isolated from a boil. This culture was painted on the throat of a person who had been a carrier of the Klebs-Löffler bacilli, the organism causing diphtheria, for 100 days. Within forty-eight hours after treatment every germ had disappeared. He later applied the same treatment to his son who was first treated with antitoxin. More than three weeks after the seizure the child, although apparently well, when cultures were made from the throat showed abundant diphtheria bacilli. After thorough treatment by painting with the staphylococcus culture the throat became normal. The procedure is harmless and partial failure may be expected if the staphylococcus culture is used with too much timidity.

ARTIFICIAL FEEDING OF ONE HUNDRED INFANTS.—Those who are responsible for the food of bottle-fed babies should study carefully the paper by Dr. Frank C. Neff on this subject in the *Journal of the American Medical Association.*

He found that milk sugar is not as well absorbed as maltose, frequently caused a rise in temperature, and had the smallest influence on the body growth. Many patients showed a gain in growth which could not be ascribed to any cause than the change from milk-sugar to malt-sugar.

He found that the average length of time before a new-born infant regains his initial weight is eleven days. The rectal temperature of infants under six months of age is 98.6° F. Peptonization of milk showed no advantages in the new-born, but is occasionally beneficial in older children.

Buttermilk is a useful food in some cases even in the first weeks of life, and when breast milk is not available should be tried in cases of fat intolerance and of interocolitis. Some infants showed increased weight when fed on skimmed milk, which when suitably diluted can be made the basis for fat and sugar additions. Malt soup was, in his experience, the food that proved the best milk preparation. This is made by boiling malt soup extract with flour and when cool diluting the mixture with milk. Four formulæ are given.

THE National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis states that during the year 1911 the greatest percentage of increase among the different forms of tuberculosis work was among the open air schools for anaemic and tuberculous children. On January 1, 1911, there were only 29 open air schools in operation or provided for in the entire country. On January 1, 1912, there were 91, an increase of 214 per cent. Sixty-two new schools have been established or provided for this past year. This entire number of open air schools have been established since January 1, 1907.